

From: Marc Schuette
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/28/02 6:28pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Sir/Madam:

I would like to exercise my right to comment on the proposed Microsoft settlement. I have been involved with the deployment of technology in private businesses for the last seven years and have been involved in the technology industry for the last 15 years. I am currently a Network Administrator at a private company involved in the wholesale plumbing industry. During my career I have come across situations where system incompatibilities causes by what I feel is poor quality programming on the part of Microsoft. When I searched for answers to these problems more often than not I came across comments that basically said 'Microsoft believes it should be that way so that the way it is and because they control the operating system it cannot be changed'. Open standards such as JAVA which Microsoft 'broke' and then when caught in a lawsuit with Sun Microsystems simply refused to include in future versions of the Windows operating system even though the JAVA language held a good chance of easing the burden of portable of software across different platforms (operating systems). Also Microsoft has continually 'tinkered' with the SMB protocol causing headaches and downtime for any company or person running the open source program SAMBA which allows a company to implement a robust and heterogeneous network. Under Windows 2000 Microsoft modified a version of Kerberos and then called it Microsoft Authorization Data Specification v. 1.0 and required strict disclosure agreement to see the format of the version they had released which had broken networking features that had previously worked. Programmers were caught between a rock and a hard place because how could they repair the damage if they were not allowed to use the information Microsoft was asking them NOT to disclose?

By 'breaking' or 'extending' these current standards Microsoft makes it difficult if not impossible for new entrants and innovators to truly compete in the marketplace. Microsoft has too great of a hold on our desktop operating systems at the current time. The world has seen time and time again that because of the homogeneity of these networks a single virus can move through and cause huge amounts of damage. So why can't network operators move to a more heterogeneous network? The main reason is the limited compatibility between Microsoft and other vendors. One might say well Microsoft just puts out a better product and the others cannot keep up so don't penalize Microsoft. That statement though could not be farther from the truth. How can anyone compete with a monopoly? If Microsoft can't compete then it simply tweaks the operating system and now a competing vendors product seems to perform far worse than a similar Microsoft product. Isn't it the place of the government to facilitate the marketplace? If so then how can the government or

court overseeing this case accept this settlement and believe that acceptable public good was done? Please reject the current settlement and place much tougher restrictions or concessions on Microsoft that open the marketplace to the true innovators and loosen the grip of the incumbent, proprietary solution provider. I could go on and on and on but I think the message I wanted to get across has been made - don't approve the current Microsoft settlement and don't approve any settlement that falls short of facilitating the marketplace. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

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